

VZCZCXR07823
RR RUEHSK RUEHSL
DE RUCNDT #1029/01 3171843

ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 131843Z NOV 09
FM USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 7607
INFO RUCNDSC/DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE COLLECTIVE
RUEHUJA/AMEMBASSY ABUJA 0432
RUEHDS/AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA 2140
RUEHDK/AMEMBASSY DAKAR 0290
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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 USUN NEW YORK 001029

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: CD CDG PARM PREL UNGA

SUBJECT: 64TH UNGA/FIRST COMMITTEE THEMATIC DEBATE:
CONVENTIONAL ARMS - PART 3

¶1. (U) The UN First Committee (Disarmament and International Security) conducted its thematic debate on conventional weapons from October 23 to 28. The issues of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons (SA/LW), an Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) and elements of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) were brought up by most delegations.

¶2. Israel

(U) Israel stated that there needs to be a balance between legitimate self defense and excessive stockpiling of SA/LW. It pointed to transfers to extremist and terrorist groups such as Hezbollah and Hamas by Iran and Syria. Israel said it gives priority to UN bans and resolutions about arms transfers. It supports an ATT that has a high standard for export controls, allows decisions on exports to remain the sovereign right of states and restricts transfers to terrorist organizations.

¶3. Senegal

(U) Senegal equated SA/LW with weapons of mass destruction (WMD) because of their link to crime, terrorism and slowing the pace of development. It called for an ATT to include all types of weapons. It supports the ban on antipersonnel landmines.

¶4. Ethiopia

(U) Ethiopia noted the effect that SA/LW has on Africa calling it the true WMD. It stated that it is working to prevent the illicit trade in SA/LW in the Great Lakes Region and the Horn of Africa.

¶5. Austria

(U) Austria noted that SA/LW were the true WMD, pointed out that they kill hundreds of thousands of people per year, and stated that Australia was working with countries in Africa on the issue. Australia supports the ATT and calls on all states to accede to the mine ban treaty and convention on cluster munitions. It supports the ban on antipersonnel landmines and assistance to victims of landmines.

¶6. Nigeria speaking for the African group

(U) Nigeria said the African Group supports international action towards a legally binding ATT anchored in the principles of the UN Charter, and said it should be an

efficient tool to combat the illicit trade in conventional weapons.

¶7. Tanzania

(U) Tanzania noted that conventional weapons caused instability on the African continent and were contributory factors in illegitimate and unconstitutional changes of governments. It urged governments to fight the illicit trade in SA/LW. It supported an ATT and pointed to the negative impact of the rise of military expenditures at a time of humanitarian need.

¶8. Morocco

(U) Morocco is concerned about the prevalence of illicit SA/LW, especially in Africa and said it supports the UN program of action on SA/LW. It stated that the ATT should not affect the rights of states to procure weapons for self-defense.

¶9. Burkina Faso

(U) Burkina Faso noted that SA/LW undermines the socio-economic development of countries, and in the fragile context in post-conflict situations, were one of the main obstacles to peace building strategies and the demobilization of former combatants. It called on all states to fight the illicit trade of SA/LW.

¶10. (U) Right of Reply: Syria responded to Israel's

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statements stating that Israel "tried to misinform the committee about Syrian arms transfers to Lebanon." It said that Israel was violating Lebanese territory and has not provided information where it planted mines and dropped cluster munitions.

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